[English]

Expansion of DD Network in North Eastern States

*29. SHRI MANGAT RAM SHARMA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken to expand DD Network and improve transmission in the North Eastern States keeping in view the Prime Minister's initiatives for the North-Eastern Region;

(b) the problems being faced in this regard;

(c) whether Government have drawn-up any strategy to meet the problems including manpower and financial constraint; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to improve the quality of programme in regional Kendras by maximum utilisation of regional Satellite Service according to specific requirements of the areas ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) As a result of the initiative taken by the Prime Minister for the North Eastern Region, satellite uplinking facilities at Shillong, Kohima, Imphal, Aizwal, Agartala and Itanagar and 37 TV transmitters of varying power for primary channel service and 5 a smitters for relay of DD-II service are proposed to be taken up for implementation in the North-Eastern States during the current financial year. Major problems being faced in this regard are :

(i) Constraint of trained manpower and adequate resources.

(ii) The nature of terrain in the region and lack of adequate transport facility which do not facilitate easy installation of Hardware and restricts coverage.

(iii) Law and order situation in some parts of the region.

(c) An outlay of approx. Rs. 200 crore has been proposed for expansion of terrestrial Doordarshan network in the North-Eastern States. Doordarshan has also taken up a special scheme to train local people for appointment as Cameramen with a view to meet the acute shortage of trained manpower in the North-Eastern States.

(d) The Regional Satellite Service have been introduced to expand the reach of regional service to all parts of the country, including the entire North-Eastern region, and to provide more software in regional languages when terrestrial transmitters have to relay National Programmes. On DD-13, the channel for Assam and North-East, time slots have been provided for various programmes of local interest and also, funds have been provided to Programme Production Centre, Guwahati to commission quality programmes for all the States In the North-eastern region.

[Translation]

Demand of Steel

*30. SHRI NITISH KUMAR :
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have assessed the demand of steel in the country by 2001-02;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have made any efforts to meet this demand;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the total production capacity of steel at present and the total quantity of steel for which licenses have been issued ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) and (b) As per projections made by the Working Group on Iron and Steel for the IX Five Year Plan, the demand for finished carbon steel in the country is likely to be 32.68 million tonnes (net) by 2001-02, the terminal year of the IX Five Year Plan. The Working Group has also projected an export potential of 6 million tonnes by 2001-02.

(c) and (d) As per projections made by the Working Group, production of finished carbon steel will reach 38.012 million tonnes (net) by 2001-02, the increase in production coming from modernisation and expansion of existing integrated steel plants and creation of new capacities in private sector. The Working Group has also projected total investment of about Rs. 52498 crores in the steel sector during IX Five Year Plan, with public sector investing around Rs. 20,005 crores. Keeping in tune with present economic policy, Ministry of Steel is endeavouring to facilitate creation of new capacities by making realistic projections of demand and removal of bottlenecks through